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## Snow plow simulator

By Amy Cherry

Even though we've already had one small snowstorm, DelDOT snowplow drivers are gearing up for what could be a bad winter.

WDEL's Amy Cherry took a look at their training and even got behind the wheel to see whether she's fit to be a snow plow operator.

"This right here is the closest thing you get to being out there, so it's real," says Dorsey Johnson, who's been driving snow plows for DelDOT for 13 years. So I strapped in and gave it a whirl.

"So we're starting it," I said as I turned the key in the ignition. That's one of a few things I did right.

The training went pretty well there for awhile, then the simulator got intense.

"Move to your left, and now watch your mirror," says the trainer.

I learned DelDOT snow plow operators use the sound of the rumble strips on the side of the highway to know where they are when they can't see the painted lines.

"Ahh! We're spinning," I screamed.

"See that, you're in icy conditions," says the trainer.

Then, the simulator told me to pull over, but the trainer said don't pull over, keep going. I hit a little patch of black ice, but I didn't put my foot on the brakes - rule number one when you start spinning.

Then, I got brave...

"Can you throw some ice in my path?" I asked.

Shortly after, I crashed.

"Did you bring your checkbook with you? Because you just crashed our simulator," joked the trainer.

But Johnson says anyone could crash at anytime.

"You're never too experienced underneath the wheel to not have an accident so it's real good training," says Johnson.